

Testimony of Home Performance Alliance of Connecticut (HPACT)
Before the Energy & **Technology Committee**

**H.B. No. 6360 AN ACT CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTICUT'S
COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY STRATEGY**

Submitted by

Raquel Kennedy & Peter Callan On Behalf of the HPACT

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Dear Senator Duff, Representative Reed, Senator LeBeau and Representative Steinberg and all the esteemed members of the Energy and Technology Committee. We appreciate the opportunity afforded by you to be able to testify today.

My name is Raquel Kennedy with Victory Energy Solutions and the Chair of Advocacy for The Home Performance Alliance of Connecticut (HPACT) and this is my colleague Peter Callan from Lantern Energy and president of the HPACT organization. We are here speaking on behalf of The Home Performance Alliance of Connecticut (HPACT) regarding of H.B. No. 6360 AN ACT CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTICUT'S COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY STRATEGY

In support of conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy, HPACT is collaborative voice for home performance professionals and the first organization of its kind in Connecticut. We provide an opportunity for collaboration among energy professionals to promote awareness of the benefits of building performance, create resources for information, education and training.

Since 2011, we have proactively advocated for policies that will support a self-sustaining market for home energy performance by working effectively with aligned local, regional and national stakeholders. Our companies Victory Energy Solutions and Lantern Energy are representative of many of the Home Performance and Energy Management Contractors in Connecticut who have contracts with CL&P and United Illuminating to provide the Home Energy Solutions Program (HES) and Home Performance services such as home energy assessments, advanced air sealing, insulation, windows and HVAC replacement all within the context of Building Science and within the parameters of the Energy Efficiency Fund. Rate payers access core services through the Home Energy Solutions program valued at \$800 or more for under \$100 with additional incentives and low cost financing available. Through a partner program, the Clean Energy Communities, offered jointly by the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority and the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund, communities successfully encourage support for energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy and drive HES program participation.

The Energy and Technology Committee has a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate leadership and advance a vision of a brighter energy future for our State through the support of HB 6360. We are encouraged that your leadership in conjunction with that of the Malloy Administration and the DEEP will provide the needed catalyst to move forward, to build a stronger energy efficiency infrastructure and to help facilitate our ability to create new jobs and contribute to a growing Connecticut economy.

Many of us in this room have been responsible for the development and growth of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs that are the seeds of a significant growing industry in Connecticut. HPACT and the Home Performance and Home Energy Solutions (HES) contractors are an indispensable partner in the continued growth of our industry and we bring a private sector perspective that is crucial to the success of any legislation and strategies.

Several weeks ago at the time of President Obama's State of the Union address, a Connecticut poll indicated that nearly half of Connecticut residents want the President to focus on Jobs and the economy. The award winning Home Energy Solutions Program, the Clean Energy Communities Program and the Neighbor 2 Neighbor Energy Challenge are important conduits for the progress of an industry that is ready to take huge leaps forward in terms of economic development and job creation in addition to the positive health, safety, comfort and wellness benefits of energy efficiency to our homes and Connecticut's rate payers. Decisions that are made, the policies that are promoted, cannot be made only within the context of conservation, efficiency, or clean energy opportunities alone but must also be made within the context of economic development and job creation and legislation must include provisions that promote actions to that affect. The state of Connecticut spends millions of tax payer's dollars to entice businesses to come to Connecticut or remain in Connecticut. We hold here within this energy industry the ability to grow exponentially at a fraction of those expenditures. We must nurture this industry and give significant consideration to the policies made and their impact on small business development, employment and the tangential benefits to many spin off industries in addition to the focus of

BTU savings! This is crucial to HPACT's membership, our ability to create more jobs and the growth of this industry growth must be in the forefront of legislative decisions and subsequent administrative policies. Plainly speaking, consistent and coherent policy initiatives and follow through actions move this industry forward; the opposite undermines the credibility of this industry and our ability to move forward be successful!

Oil Heated Homes

During last year's legislative session HPACT successfully lobbied before your committee for a temporary fix for the heating oil customer's access to energy efficiency services and resulted in the ability of the Home Energy Solutions Program to service these homes. Without this temporary measure many oil heated homes would have been colder this winter with significantly higher fuel costs and our industry would have had significant staff layoffs. This year, oil customers, who have the highest home heating costs of any fuel source, pay more to access energy efficiency services than homes heated by natural gas and electricity. We need a permanent fix for these customers..... not everyone can convert to natural gas.

Please consider:

- The impact on job creation and economic development when the Home Energy Solutions program and home performance contractors can't equally service 60% of the homes in Connecticut that are heated with oil or propane or when these homeowners spend a disproportionate amount of their income to heat their homes and have little left to spend on everything else.

- Oil customers need access to rebates and financing as much as everyone else. We can't meet the State's goals of weatherizing 80% of homes by 2030 without assisting oil heated homes.
- The establishment of a conservation fee on oil of 3.5 cents/gallon which would be just \$24.50 a year for an oil user using 700 gallons per year and spending \$2500 on oil.

Gas Conversions

HPACT recognizes that supporting gas conversions is one other tool in support of a clean and affordable fuel source, but we ask that you require weatherization work through the Home Energy Solutions Program to be done along with any conversions to natural gas. This will help towards meeting the State's 2030 weatherization goal, preclude wasting gas in inefficient buildings, oversizing HVAC systems to compensate for leaky buildings and support economic development and job creation in a significant way

Energy Disclosure

Consumers have every right to know and understand the energy consumption of the residential units they are purchasing or renting as it impacts not only their budgets but the health, safety and comfort of their families in their indoor living environment. In the Home Energy Solutions Program and its ability to promote residential and multifamily energy efficiency and through its relationship with the Clean Energy Communities and the Neighbor 2 Neighbor Energy challenge, there

is every reason to expect that energy disclosure and energy efficiency services should be accessible to most Connecticut Rate Payers.

The HPACT organization has attracted a small, but highly knowledgeable, industry specific group that, through the diversity of its and leadership and members, has achieved the professional courtesy and respect of regulators and stakeholders.

HPACT leadership has done an admirable job in realizing and prioritizing highly visible roles and responsibilities necessary to increase the visibility of the organization despite the limited resources and funding levels enjoyed on the national levels. Please use us as your private sector resource as you continue to move energy policy on our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.